

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1301

C O N F I D E N T I A L USE MANAGUA 4702

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SHUM, NU

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT SOMOZA'S MEETING WITH BISHOPS

REF: MANAGUA 4141

1. EMB HAS RECEIVED TEXT OF PRESIDENT SOMOZA'S AUGUST 24 REMARKS TO BISHOPS (REPORTED REFTTEL) REGARDING PROBLEM OF COMBATTING FSLN ACTIVITIES. TEXT WILL BE POUCHED.

2. SOMOZA COMES CLOSE TO ADDRESSING BISHOPS' CONCERN RE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION WHEN HE ACKNOWLEDGES THAT, BECAUSE OF THE INSURGENCY CONDITION, THE GN"...IN COMPLYING WITH ITS MISSION TO BE THE WATCHMEN OF PEACE AND SECURITY, TO MAINTAIN ORDER AND TO PROTECT THE CITIZENS, HAS HAD TO STEP UP ITS POLICE OPERATIONS IN THE AFFECTED ZONES, WITH THE GOAL OF INTENSIFYING VIGILANCE; AND IN THIS LABOR, LOGICALLY, ARMED ENCOUNTERS HAVE TO OCCUR AND, AS AN UNFORTUNATE CONSEQUENCE, DEATHS AND INJURIES ON BOTH SIDES..."

3. SOME BURNING OF HOUSES BY THE GN WAS ACKNOWLEDGED. SOMOZA STATED THAT 90 PERCENT OF THE ABNDONED HOUSES AND LAND IN THE AREA OF CONFLICT BELONGED TO CAMPESINOS WHO AS A RESULT OF FORCE, TRICKERY OR FALSE PROMISES, HAD JOINED THE FSLN. THESE HOUSES THEN BECAME THEIR REFUGE POINTS AND SITES FOR AMBUSHES AGAINST THE GN. THEREFORE, THE HOUSES WERE DESTROYED.

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4. SOMOZA TOOK THE OFFENSIVE IN ACCUSING FATHER FERNANDO CARDENAL

OF BECOMING AN OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN FOR THE FSLN CAMPAIGN OF DEFEM-
ATION BASED ON UNTRUTHS. HE ASSAILED THOSE WHO ALWAYS DEMONSTRATE
THEIR PREOCCUPATION FOR THE CAMPESINOS OR PERSONS WHO COLLABORATE
AND PARTICIPATE IN THE VIOLENCE AND VANDALISM OF THE REGION BUT
NEVER ARE PREOCCUPIED WITH THE FATE OF THE SOLDIERS OR LOCAL RURAL
AUTHORITIES OR THEIR FAMILIES WHO ALSO ARE CHILDREN OF GOD.
SOMOZA ALSO WARNED THAT THE "MOVIMIENTO CRISTIANO" WAS PENETRATED
BY ATHEISTIC COMMUNISTS AND SERVED ONLY TO GIVE SUPPORT TO THE
FSLN.

5. EMB COMMENT: IN REGARD TO SOMOZA'S CHARGE AGAINST CARDENAL,
HE REFERRED THE BISHOPS TO AN FSLN COMMUNIQUE OF FEBRUARY 21, 1976
AND THEN PAGES 9 AND 10 OF CARDENAL'S TESTIMONY. EMB HAS ANALYZED
THESE DOCUMENTS AND FOUND THAT CARDENAL'S LISTING OF NAMES OF PER-
SONS MISSING AND IMPRISONED (SECTION 5 OF HIS TESTIMONY) CLOSELY
REFLECTS THE NAMES LISTED IN THE EARLIER FSLN DOCUMENT. FOR EXAM-
PLE, IN THE SECOND AND FOURTH PARAGRAPHS APPEAR 59 NAMES OF CUSCA-
WAS RESIDENTS WHOSE HOUSES WERE BURNED, LOOTED OR WHO HAVE BEEN
DETAINED. ALL BUT FOUR OF THESE NAMES APPEAR IN THE EARLIER FSLN
DOCUMENT. MOST IMPORTANTLY THESE NAMES, WHICH ARE NOT IN ALPHA-
BETICAL ORDER, ARE LISTED IN THE CARDENAL TESTIMONY IN THE SAME
ORDER AS IN THE FSLN DOCUMENT. THUS IT SEEMS CLEAR ONE SOURCE
USED BY CARDENAL IN PREPARING HIS TESTIMONY WAS AN FSLN DOCUMENT.
THIS DOES NOT MEAN THE INFORMATION IS INCORRECT OR FABRICATED, BUT
IT DOES INDICATE THAT TO SOME EXTENT HE WAS ACTING, AS CHARGED
BY THE PRESIDENT, AS A SPOKESMAN FOR THE FSLN. THE CIRCLE WAS
COMPLETED WHEN THE FSLN CIRCULATED CARDENAL'S TESTIMONY CONTAINING
THE SAME NAMES.
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